

REMARKS:

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated October 18, 2004, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on January 18, 2005. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-19 and 21-62 remain pending in the application upon entry of this response. Claims 4, 11 and 20 have been cancelled. Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-10, 12-13, 15-19 and 30 stand rejected. Claims 1-2, 5-6, 8-9, 12-15, 17-19, 22-23, 26-27 and 29-30 have been amended. Claims 4, 11 and 20 stood objected to, but would have been allowable if rewritten in independent form, hence, claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended to include elements from claims 4, 11 and 20. Claims 21-29 have been allowed by Examiner. Claims 31-62 have been added. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested for reason presented below.

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-10, 12-13, 15-19 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Benze, et al.*, DE 3937720A, herein "*Benze*," in view of *Spector*, U.S. Patent No. 5,007,529, herein "*Spector*." Examiner asserts it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize in *Benze* an enclosure as taught by *Spector* in order to contain a microwave-safe material for effecting a cleaning process. Applicant respectively traverses the rejection.

Benze discloses a process for cleaning a microwave oven that includes placing a wetted cloth containing a surfactant solution in the microwave oven, operating the oven to heat the cloth, allowing the cloth to cool down and wiping the interior of the microwave oven with the cloth. *Spector* discloses a microwavable air-freshener package that is warmed in a microwave oven, removed from the oven, placed in a room, and allowed to emit scented vapor throughout the room by opening a valve. *Spector* is completely silent to a cleaning process for a microwave oven. *Spector* teaches against aqueous surfactant solutions, as necessary by *Benze*. In *Spector*, the "package contains no water or other fluid that can spill out of the package" (column 3, lines 65-66) and "the ingredients are combined with a highly volatile alcohol carrier" (column 3, lines 19-20). In *Benze*, a cloth wetted with an aqueous surfactant solution is simply placed in the oven. *Benze* is

completely silent to any type of container. The device of *Spector* releases a volatile organic vapor and teaches against emitting or forming an aqueous residue, while an aqueous residue is mandatory for the invention of *Benze* to succeed. Therefore, there is no suggestion or motivation in neither *Benze* nor *Spector*, either alone or in combination, to describe the present claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant fails to see how one skilled in the art would be motivated to combine *Benze*, a process to clean a microwave oven, and *Spector*, an air-freshener apparatus.

Furthermore, *Spector* discloses that the container is formed of a cylindrical can (10) and a cover (11) such that the "container is molded or **otherwise formed from a closed-cell foamed** polyurethane, styrofoam or other rigid foam plastic material" (column 2, lines 40-45). *Spector* remains completely silent to having an opened container during microwave use. In fact, *Spector* teaches away from *Benze*, since the "vapor is discharged into the atmosphere through the vent when the package is removed from the oven and placed in a room" (Abstract). Again, Applicant fails to see how one skilled in the art would be motivated to combine *Benze*, a process to clean a microwave oven, and *Spector*, an air-freshener apparatus.

Benze and *Spector*, alone or in combination, do not teach, show or suggest an apparatus for cleaning an interior of a microwave oven, comprising an enclosure disposed at least partially around a cleaning article for effecting a cleaning process, wherein the enclosure is deformable, and a cleaning solution comprising a surfactant and compatible with food preparation, wherein the cleaning solution is in fluid communication with the interior of the microwave oven after the enclosure is deformed, as recited in claim 1 and claims 2-3 and 5-6 dependant thereon.

Also, *Benze* and *Spector*, alone or in combination, do not teach, show or suggest an apparatus for cleaning an interior of a microwave oven comprising an enclosure disposed at least partially around a surfactant solution compatible with food preparation, wherein the enclosure is deformable to deliver the surfactant solution into fluid communication with the interior of the microwave oven, and a cleaning article for effecting a cleaning process, as recited in claim 8 and claims 9-10 and 12-13 dependant thereon.

Also, *Benze* and *Spector*, alone or in combination, do not teach, show or suggest a method for cleaning an interior of a microwave oven using a cleaning apparatus

comprising a cleaning article and an enclosure containing a surfactant solution, comprising heating the cleaning apparatus with microwave energy for a period to evaporate a portion of the surfactant solution to form a vapor, emitting the vapor from the enclosure into the microwave oven, wherein the enclosure is deformable to enable dispersion of the vapor, condensing at least a portion of the vapor onto the interior, maintaining the microwave oven for a second period to hydrate a residue adhered to the interior, and removing the residue from the interior with the cleaning article, as recited in claim 15 and claims 16-19 dependant thereon.

Further, *Benze and Spector*, alone or in combination, do not teach, show or suggest an apparatus for cleaning an interior of a microwave oven comprising an enclosure comprising a seal disposed at least partially around a surfactant solution compatible with food preparation, wherein the seal is deformable to enable the surfactant solution to be in fluid communication with the interior of the microwave oven, and a cleaning article for effecting a cleaning process, as recited in claim 30.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

In conclusion, the references cited by Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show or suggest claimed aspects of the invention. Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

If Examiner would like to discuss this response further, please feel free to call Applicant by telephone at 617.233.4415.

Respectfully submitted,


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